

January 10, 1985

would not accept in any other institution of government, to accept that here in the law-making body would be a terrible, terrible mistake and an incredible message to send to the public. If the Governor came in here and suggested that all his personnel should be decided on the basis of seniority, why he wouldn't dare introduce it and we would laugh him out if he did. The United State Congress, the biggest criticism I've heard of the United State Congress over the years is that everything is on the basis of seniority, good people can't rise to the top and they can never organize to get a legislative agenda done. That is the problem we have in here is that we don't organize to get a legislative agenda. It's not a corrupt purpose. Everybody in here has ideals. I think most people in here have ideals. To pursue those ideals you do, what in your judgement, needs to be done. Some people organize. Some people are independent. That doesn't mean that either is corrupt because ultimately the ultimate purpose of organization, if the ultimate purpose of organization in the minds of those individuals is an overall beneficial effect to their philosophy and their constituents, then there is not a thing wrong with organization or organizing. All committees are not equal. Are we suggesting, by a seniority system, that the important committees of this Legislature should be treated as if they are equal to all the other committees, that in a particular time in our history that certain issues aren't more important and that we shouldn't give some emphasis to certain committees with certain individuals? Are we just going to do it by seniority, regardless of the times, regardless of the issues, regardless of everything? I think that makes no sense at all. Such a rule favors safe districts. If you are person who is from a safe district, as a number of us in here are, as a number of those who have argued strenuously in favor of this particular rule are, then of course that makes a lot of sense.

PRESIDENT: One minute, Senator.

SENATOR BEUTLER: What about if you are from a swing district and there is a new senator every four or eight years instead of somebody here for 20 years? Then, obviously, those individual constituents in that particular district are being punished by a seniority system if put into effect here. Those are a few of the arguments I think we should think about. Thank you.